



Minuteman UPDATE

May 2003

Massachusetts National
Guard monthly
newsletter for members,
families, and friends

Guarding a famous run through the capital city

By Cadet Lindsey Elder, STARC PAO

Added security and crowd control at the running of the Boston Marathon has been a Mass. National Guard tradition for over 20 years. Hundreds of soldiers from all specialties were eager to help with anything involving the public's safety, especially in a case where the event can do so much for the state's morale and provide guardsmen a chance to shine while doing their 365-year-old mission: homeland defense.

"It's entirely voluntary," said Capt. Thomas Reed, commander of C Co., 181st Engineer Battalion in Adams. Soldiers were on guard at the start point in Hopkinton, providing added protection and surveillance against any attempted threats at the century-old race that draws thousands to the city.

The Air National Guard also contributed to the day's event. Two F-15 Eagles from the 102nd Fighter Wing flew over at the conclusion of the National Anthem prior to the start of the race.

The Mass. National Guard also had

several runners in the Marathon. The fastest was Senior Airman Joshua Hill from the 102nd Communications Squadron with a time of 3:54. Finishing second for the registered Guard member-runners was Maj. Kris Briggs with a time of 4:15, and third was Sgt. 1st Class Felix Padiol from Recruiting and Retention Command at 4:24.

Of the 17 members registered as runners for the Mass. National Guard, other top finishers were Staff Sgt. William Pouliot of the 726th Finance Battalion, Maj. William Faubion of the 104th Fighter Wing, Capt. James Yates from Headquarters



Photo by Cadet Lindsey Elder, STARC PAO

Battery, 101st Field Artillery, Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Lamont of STARC, Spc. Kevin Maloney of the 1-126th Aviation, and Sgt. Derek Goodman of Alpha Battery, 101st Field Artillery.

Anheuser Busch offers free park admission for soldiers

Anheuser Busch will give free single day admission to Sea World, Busch Gardens and Sesame Place parks to active duty military, active reservists, Coast Guard and Guardsmen, and as many as four direct dependents. The benefit begins Memorial Day weekend and ends Veterans Day, November 11. The offer has also been extended to all coalition forces serving with U.S. troops in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"The men and women in our armed forces have made tremendous sacrifices, risking their lives and being separated from their families during the war," said August A. Busch III, chairman of Anheuser-Busch Cos. Inc., which operates nine U.S. theme parks. "We wanted to express our deep gratitude for their service, and this gives those who serve and their families some needed relaxation and enjoyment."

Operation Salute will give free admission at Busch

Gardens Tampa Bay; Busch Gardens Williamsburg; Sea World Orlando; Sea World San Diego; Sea World San Antonio; and Sesame Place in Langhorne, Pa.

"Operation Salute is exactly what we mean at the USO when we talk about the incredible power of 'thank you,'" said Edward A. "Ned" Powell, president and chief executive officer of the United Service Organizations(USO). "It is an extraordinary example of a company's recognition of the sacrifices our military makes on behalf of all Americans."

Anheuser-Busch has previously honored U.S. Armed Forces with free admission to its theme parks. Nearly 1 million service members and their families visited free during Yellow Ribbon Summer following the first Gulf War and during the Anheuser-Busch Salute to America's Heroes, a post-911 tribute that included all branches of the military.

NGAMA discusses strategy at annual business meetings

By Staff Sgt. George Young, STARC PAO

Members of National Guard Association of Massachusetts met at STARC in Milford, on April 26 for their annual business meeting. The NGAMA has been serving National Guard members, retirees and their families since 1905.

Over 11,000 members belong to the association but with retention efforts enrollment should increase. "I'd like to see more involvement from both the junior and senior leadership, said 2nd Lt. Nicole Ivers, NGAMA President.

Ivers will pass the presidency on to Maj. Thomas Maeder 2004. Maj. Gerald Catrett will take over as the new 1st vice president and Maj. Virginia Doonan was elected 2nd vice president.

Guest speakers at the meeting included Col. Donald Quenneville, Brig. Gen. Gary Pappas, and the Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. George W. Keefe. Mission effectiveness and operational readiness were key topics of discussion. The events in Iraq are testing Guard members every day and they are proving to be capable, professional, and able to work side by side with their active duty counterparts.

Recruiting and Retention were also on the agenda. Keefe emphasized the importance of maintaining an educated and well-equipped military force.

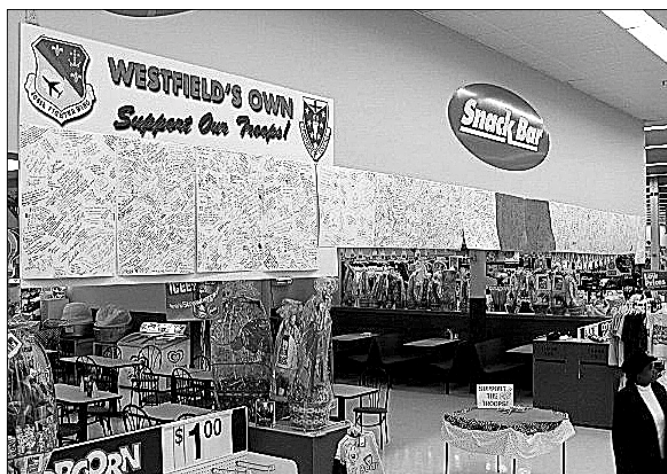


Photo by Don Byram, Store Manager of Westfield Wal-Mart

Local retailer shows support for Guard

The Wal-Mart in Westfield created a signature wall for customers to show support for area Army and Air Guard members.

Westfield is home to the 104th Infantry, which has approximately 300 soldiers performing Homeland Defense missions.

The town is also home to the 104th Fighter Wing - nearly 500 airmen from the unit recently returned from the Middle East.

To date, Wal-Mart has 23 sheets of poster board displayed at the entrance to the store with approximately 1,400 greetings.

Mass. Guard announces new license plates

The Adjutant General recently authorized the issuance of four two-digit NG license plates. Plates are available to members of the Army and Air National Guard and to those retired members with 20 years of service. State Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Belanger is the point of contact for all license plate issues.

National Guard License Plate Raffle

Name

Street address, Apt. number

Town, State, Zip-code

Home phone number

Work phone number

The plates will be awarded via a raffle. To participate, cut out the entry form Provided and fill in the missing information.

Mail the form to:

CSM Richard Belanger
50 Maple St.
Milford, Ma 01757

The deadline for entries is 31 July 2003

Letter from the desert

Editor's note: The following is a letter from the commander of E Company, 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, which is based out of Cambridge and is currently serving in the Middle East. The unit specializes in counterintelligence, human intelligence gathering and language interpretation.

E Company is doing great. I am incredibly impressed by the high morale, camaraderie and overall great attitude of all our deployed officers and soldiers. This is not the greatest location in the world. Hot and dusty are the two words that continually come to mind. But despite pretty austere conditions, everyone is in remarkably good spirits.

Email and phones are in short supply. You have to wait in long lines for both.

The conditions here are very basic. We sleep in big tents of approximately 50-60 people. Some are air-conditioned; most are not. We get three hot meals per day. The food is okay, but pretty bland and the menu is not too exciting. We have pretty good access to hot showers. Porta-johns are it for toilet facilities. These get a little ripe around mid day.

The weather is what you would expect in the desert in the spring. Temps range from around 60 degrees at night to 105 degrees during the day. It is just going to get hotter as we head into May. It is very dusty. We have been pretty lucky regarding sandstorms, but there is plenty of blowing sand and dust. It gets into everything. There is no grass, no trees and very little wild life (occasional wild dogs and a couple of birds flying around).

We tend to work in the early morning, rest mid day and then train later in the afternoon and early evening. A couple of us work the night shift.

We do all our laundry by hand. It is pretty comical watching my folks trying to squeeze the water out of their uniforms. One thing, stuff dries pretty quickly in the desert.

We do a lot of maintenance. Dust gets into everything here, so we are always cleaning our weapons, protective masks and other equipment. We want to make sure everything works when and if we need it.

As the war is going so well, security is getting better and better. We still must wear all of our "battle rattle" (helmets, load bearing equipment, weapons and protective mask). All of us still keep our guard up, particularly if there is a need to leave the camp. A whole bunch of Massachusetts Military Police just showed up here, so that helps us sleep at night.

I hope this helps everyone understand what life is like over here. Thanks for all your support. We miss you all and look forward to coming home.

MAJ Dan Arkins
Commander
E/223rd MI BN
DET 1
Massachusetts Army National Guard



L-R: Staff Sgt. Steve Lefavour (Arlington), Sgt. Darlene Flores (Quincy), Sgt. Eric Walsh (Randolph), Staff Sgt. Ben Turnberg (Springfield), Staff Sgt. Kevin Coleman (Chelsea) all from the Massachusetts National Guard's E Company, 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion out of Cambridge. The unit has been on active duty since February and is currently supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom at an undisclosed location in the Middle East.